

MEETING MINUTES  
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS  
TRANSIT COMMITTEE

July 12, 2012

Maricopa Association of Governments; Ironwood Room;  
302 N. 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Suite 200  
Phoenix, Arizona

MEMBERS ATTENDING

ADOT: Nicole Patrick	Peoria: Maher Hazine
Avondale: Rogene Hill	Phoenix: Neal Young
#Buckeye: Andrea Marquez	*Queen Creek: Kevin Johnson
Chandler: Dan Cook for RJ Zeder	Scottsdale: Madeline Clemann
#El Mirage: John Aleman for Lance Calvert	Surprise: David Kohlbeck
Gilbert: Nicole Dailey	Tempe: Greg Jordan
Glendale: Cathy Colbath, Chair	*Tolleson: Chris Hagen
Goodyear: Cato Esquivel	Valley Metro Rail/Metro: Wulf Grote
*Maricopa County DOT: Mitch Wagner	*Youngtown: Jim Fox
Mesa: Jeff Martin for Mike James	*Regional Public Transportation Authority:
*Paradise Valley: James Shano	Carol Ketcherside

\*Members neither present nor represented by proxy. + - Attended by Videoconference  
# - Attended by Audioconference

OTHERS PRESENT

Eileen Yazzie, MAG	Ken Kessler, Phoenix
Marc Pearsall, MAG	Mark Melnychenko, Phoenix
Alice Chen, MAG	Tom Callow, METRO/RPTA
Teri Kennedy, MAG	Abhi Dayal, METRO/RPTA
Vladimir Livshits, MAG	Ben Limmer, METRO/RPTA
Jorge Luna, MAG	Bob Antila, Valley Metro/RPTA
Jenna Goad, Glendale	Kammy Horne, URS
Evan Balmer, Mesa	

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. by Chair Cathy Colbath. Chair Colbath welcomed everyone in attendance and announced that a quorum was present. She noted that the following members were joining the meeting by teleconference, Ms. Andrea Marquez of Buckeye and Mr. John Aleman for Lance Calvert of El Mirage. Chair Colbath also introduced and welcomed the newest members of the Committee, Ms. Nicole Dailey of the Town of Gilbert and Ms. Nicole Patrick of ADOT. Chair Colbath asked if there were any public comment cards, and there being none, proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

2. Approval of Draft June 14, 2012 Minutes

Chair Colbath asked if there were any comments or corrections to the Draft June 14, 2012 meeting minutes. Hearing none, Chair Colbath called for a motion to approve the draft meeting minutes. Mr. Jeff Martin of Mesa moved to approve the motion and Mr. Maher Hazine of Peoria seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Call to the Audience

Chair Colbath stated that she had not received any request to speak cards from the audience and moved onto the next item on the agenda.

4. Transit Program Manager's Report

Chair Colbath introduced Ms. Eileen Yazzie of MAG who presented her Transit Program Manager's Report. Ms. Yazzie began by noting that she had two items for the agenda.

Ms. Yazzie explained that Mr. Jorge Luna had sent the member agencies an excel workbook containing information on the Transit Service Inventory Report. She noted that MAG was looking at gathering information on transit service/operations budgets, as well as information on budgets for non-service providers that purchase service. She added that information regarding how much agencies spend on facilities such as bus stops, fleet, etc were also being gathered for this report. She stated that the information was requested to be submitted by the deadline of August 3<sup>rd</sup>. She also noted that the compiled data was integral in the development of a report, that would in turn lead to the creation and programming of the FY2014-18 TIP.

Ms. Yazzie also gave a briefing on the new, Congressionally and Presidentially approved MAP-21 authorization legislation that would provide a blueprint for transportation/transit funding for the next two years and three months. She added that there was still speculation on final guidance for funding tables for the new legislation. She then reviewed some of the highlights as related to transit and added that the federal government would be consolidating some programs, such as 5310 was being reorganized with 5317, and also explained that some funding that traditionally went through the state, would now be coming directly to urbanized areas. She also added that the eligibility of the 5316 program would now be under 5307, so that

would have to be reviewed should the MAG region wish to include the JARC program.

She also explained that some things had changed in the 5309 Fixed Guideway Modernization formula, where the federal government was removing criteria related to HOV lane utilizing bus routes unless they were in their own dedicated right of way. She further explained that the 5309 Fixed Guideway Modernization funds featured the main data-driver of express routes which use shared HOV lanes in the Valley. She said that the data related to those services would no longer be calculated in the 5309 reporting. She continued by noting that the Federal Transit Administration was creating a new bus and bus livability formula program. She concluded with additional brief discussion and a summary.

Mr. Greg Jordan of Tempe inquired as to a future agenda item that might feature an overview of the completed and formalized MAP-21 programs when they are provided to MAG. Ms. Yazzie affirmed that she would present it at a future meeting.

Chair Colbath thanked Ms. Yazzie and asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing no further comments or questions, Chair Colbath proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

5. Federal Fiscal Year 2012 Transit Program of Projects for Federal Funds and FFY2013-2015 Transit Project Changes

Chair Colbath requested that Ms. Eileen Yazzie brief the committee on the Federal Fiscal Year 2012 Transit Program of Projects for Federal Funds and FFY2013-2015 Transit Project Changes. Chair Colbath noted that the item was on for information, discussion and possible action.

Ms. Yazzie referred to the agenda description and stated that if materials such as allocation tables related to the item were not made available to the Committee for review in advance of the meeting, then the item would be deferred until a future meeting. As the materials were not yet available, the item was recommended for deferral until the next meeting.

She did state that on a positive note, all of the programming decisions had been made. When the actual dollar amounts were released, the only thing MAG must do is make modifications to the tables. She noted that the region does not know the amount of CMAQ funding it will receive, so at current time it was unknown how much should be flexed over. She offered an example of a scenario, where it was estimated that the region may receive approximately \$55-56 million in CMAQ funding. If that assumption were to be lower, then the region would have to adjust the amount flexed. She also noted that in regards to the 5307 funding, it was estimated that the region may receive \$53-55 million, so modifications to the Preventive Maintenance amount, would be needed should that amount not be fulfilled. These adjustments would be made when MAG receives its final apportionments.

Mr. Jeff Martin of Mesa inquired on the funding sources for some of these programs, as there might not be enough funding to cover these in certain outlying budget years. Ms. Yazzie replied for FY2012, the region was in good shape in that regard. She added that in 2013-14, that was when changes would occur and the region would need to respond to any need

adjustment in quick fashion and that understanding the eligibility guidelines, that all of the current MAG programs would likely be able to be funded. Chair Colbath thanked Ms. Yazzie and asked if there were any further questions or comments. Hearing no further comments or questions, Chair Colbath proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

6. Transit Prioritization Guidelines for Formula Federal Funds

Chair Colbath requested that Ms. Eileen Yazzie brief the committee on the Transit Prioritization Guidelines for Formula Federal Funds.

Ms. Yazzie began by noting that there were two items on the agenda pertaining to Transit Prioritization Guidelines for Formula Federal Funds. She reminded the committee that she had previously sent out a brief memorandum as well as some additional materials regarding Preventive Maintenance(PM), both historic and estimated amounts. She added that the information was intended to give the committee as well as the Working Group an idea of the dollar amounts and percentages per year of what the region had funded and would be funding in the future for PM.

She explained that she had attached some input from two of the region's operators regarding what the value of PM was for the region and how would it help increase the overall funds for other transit budget needs. She added that they would continue to report in their findings on the impact of PM as the region moves forward.

Ms. Yazzie recapped the rationale behind why the region must create guidelines for transit prioritization. It was due in relation to the development of the FY2014-2018 TIP, and the planning that the region had done for the current TIP. The region had programmed between \$85 - \$105 million of federal funds in the 2011-2015 TIP for regional PM. She recalled that so far, the guidelines had been presented to the May 2012 Transit Committee, a working group meeting in June 2012 , followed by another working group meeting in July 2012.

Ms. Yazzie also noted a recent clarifying question from the Transit Committee of what the definition was of an RTP Project and what the definition was of a TLCP Project, as well as how/where do local projects fit in, etc. She explained that when it came to the Regional Transportation Plan, it was effectively the big umbrella that included all transit service, namely local service and regional service costs, routes, projects, ADA, non-ADA. In regards to Prop 400, that was just a portion of that. Historically, the region had used the TIP and federal funds to support those areas such as fleet replacement, PM, and TLCP projects. She summarized that developing transit prioritization guidelines was an attainable goal that would help the region manage its project funding more thoroughly.

She then explained the focus of the next working group meeting scheduled for July. She reviewed the 2008-2014 Regional Federal Funding for what had been done for PM for FY2014, and noted that it had increased since 2008. She stated that there had been previous guidelines that had capped PM, but there hadn't been a great need of recent in the region for bus replacements and expansion, which allowed the programming of funds for PM. She emphasized the need of the guidelines to reflect a balance of prioritizing local and regional

project needs. Discussion followed. She completed her report and added that she was looking to schedule the next working group meeting within the next 2-3 weeks.

Chair Colbath thanked Ms. Yazzie and asked if there were any questions or comments. Mr. Martin of Mesa requested that Ms. Yazzie give a brief overview summary of the two options available to the Committee. Ms. Yazzie replied that one scenario submitted and suggested by Phoenix featured more of a preference for the current system operating structure, with support of the regional TLCP projects that had been identified with additional new projects. In contrast, the other set of guidelines reflected a combination of existing service and regional service together. The rationale behind that option would be to implement a scoring system where the projects were weighted. The projects that were not regional in nature or included in the RTP would also go through an evaluation-criteria process. Mr. Martin inquired as to how a compromise on the options might be met, and Ms. Yazzie noted that with RPTA's input and guidance, the next working group would decide on the best path forward. Discussion followed.

Chair Colbath thanked Ms. Yazzie and asked if there were further questions or comments. Hearing no further comments or questions, she proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

#### 7. FTA Discretionary Grant Process

Chair Colbath requested that Ms. Alice Chen of MAG present an update on the FTA Discretionary Grant Process. Ms. Chen noted that the agenda item was for information and discussion. She began by noting that it appeared that the Federal Discretionary Grant Process was being discontinued as directed in the new MAP-21 legislation. She stipulated that much of what she discussed the previous month would no longer be relevant as the entire FTA process will either change, be amended or eliminated altogether. She added that the good news was that the grant would now be awarded to the region in the form of a Formula Grant.

She explained that a meeting to discuss the Discretionary Grant Process had commenced in July. It was decided that since the region would be getting new guidelines and directives regarding the grant process, the regional members would still need to configure a method and format of allocating those new FTA Formula Grants that will be taking the place of the former Federal Discretionary Grant Process. She said that the MAG Region could use FTA's new guidelines as a starting point for discussion to factor which of the FTA's goals are in-line with those of the MAG Region.

Ms. Chen also said that if the goals and objectives did appear in synch with the evaluation criteria, then the Transit Operators Working Group could recommend to use the FTA's guidelines as our own, or include additional, more-region specific guidelines as well. She then referred to the handout, and noted the comments and reviews regarding the goals, and meaningful metrics of the bus and bus livability section. She briefly reviewed the seven various criteria as presented within the handout: 1. Linkage to Livability Principles; 2. Linkage to Environmental Sustainability; 3. Leveraging of public and private investments; 4. Demonstrated Need for Resources; 5. Demonstration of Need - Bus Replacement or Rehabilitation; 6. Demonstration of Need - Bus Facilities and Equipment; and 7. Planning and Local/Regional Prioritization. Discussion followed.

Ms. Chen then gave a rundown of the schedule over the next month regarding the Discretionary Grant Process and the Transit Operators Working Group. She noted that it was a tight timetable and that things would move very quickly. The Transit Operators Working Group would make comments and recommend approval in July/August, and draft comments would then be sent to Transit Committee Members for review in the Aug/Sept. timeframe. She then concluded her presentation and offered to answer any questions or comments. Brief discussion followed.

Chair Colbath thanked Ms. Chen and asked if there were any further questions or comments. Hearing no further comments or questions, Chair Colbath proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

8. South Central AA Purpose, Needs, and Goals

Chair Colbath requested that Mr. Ben Limmer of Valley Metro present an update on the METRO South Central AA Purpose, Needs, and Goals. Mr. Limmer noted that the agenda item was for information and discussion.

Mr. Limmer began by stating that this was the second update to the Transit Committee regarding the South Central Alternatives Analysis process out of four that would continue through 2013. He also referred to page 21 of his presentation and noted that due to MAP-21 congressional and Presidential legislation, the Alternatives Analysis process had been eliminated and that Valley Metro was awaiting word on the new FTA guidance, evaluation criteria and methodology that would take the place of the traditional AA's. He added that this information was expected sometime in fall 2012.

He continued with his presentation and referred to the current High Capacity Transit System map as identified in the 2012 TLCP Update, as well as identifying the Phoenix West Extension's deferral to 2023, the Northwest Extension's acceleration to 2016 and the Northwest Extension's deferral to 2032.

Mr. Limmer then explained the details of the South Central study area, which focused from Downtown Central Ave, 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 7<sup>th</sup> Street, southward to the area of Baseline Rd /Dobbins Rd. He did point out some recent City of Phoenix Transit Investments, namely the Ed Pastor Transit Center, the upgrade of Central Station, new bus stop shelters and transit pads (due ARRA funds – \$270,000). Additionally, a new 27th Avenue/Baseline Park-and-Ride recently came on-line, with a new 24th Street/Baseline Park-and-Ride planned for 2013.

He continue with explaining the purpose and need of the proposed South Central corridor. He said that the purpose was to increase transit ridership, improve access to employment and educational facilities, and expand the regional high capacity network. Additionally, the transit corridor would support economic development/sustainable communities. He added that the need for the project was due to a variety of factors, including that walking was the predominant mode of access to transit in the area. Transit use was heavy in the study area, and that local Valley Metro buses were often crowded on Central Avenue and that over half of all Route 0 boardings occur in the study area. He noted that the study area included numerous clustered

activity centers, and that many originating and connecting transit and other trips were destined for areas served by existing LRT. He also noted that the South Central corridor and AA shared related goals that were contained within the MAG RTP, as well as improving access and mobility, sustaining the environment and accountability in planning along with broad public support for improved transit in South Phoenix and South Mountain Village.

Mr. Limmer continued with explaining Alternatives Analysis process. He said that it was the first step in the federal project development process for the purpose of recommending high capacity transit improvements in the study area. He described that the AA would answer essentially two components, the 'What' (Technology) and the 'Where' (Alignment). During the Tier 1 Mode Alternatives, the study would review a variety of applicable and most suitable modes such as light rail, modern streetcar and bus rapid transit. Also included within the Tier 1 was identifying the most appropriate alignment alternatives such as Central Avenue, 7th Avenue, and 7th Street. Some additional areas of review within the Tier 1, was the screening criteria of the following areas: ridership potential, physical and engineering constraints, land use and economic development potential, transportation network effects and cost (operating and capital). He noted that the end result of the nearly 2-year study was that a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) alignment and vehicle technology would be selected.

Mr. Limmer then explained that over the past three months, the Tier 1 alternatives had been vetted through a public process. He added that a set of alternatives were identified to move forward into Tier 2 alignment alternatives. The first was a Central/1st Avenue, bus rapid transit (BRT) option which would use the existing couplet under the Union Pacific Railroad and along Jackson St. Due to the the limitations of the older roadway and infrastructure, BRT was deemed not feasible under Central Ave underpasses in Downtown Phoenix.

Another Tier 2 alignment alternative recommended for further study was the Central/1st Avenue couplet for light rail transit (LRT) and Modern Streetcar. That option would use the much wider 1st Avenue for two-way operation under the UPRR. The guideway would then transition to Central Ave via Madison St for re-connection to the on-way couplet northbound. The last Tier 2 alignment alternative recommended for further review was the 7th Avenue/Central Avenue option for LRT, BRT, and Modern Streetcar. Central Ave / Buckeye Rd / 7th Ave would be used in order to provide improved access to housing and a medical center on 7th Ave. The option would also require a new bridge over the UPRR for LRT and Modern Streetcar.

Mr. Limmer explained that during the public involvement process, there had been much feedback to date, with over forty small group meetings held and approximately 140 stakeholders in the database. There had been two public meetings during the summer, with additional attendance at several community events such as the Juneteenth Freedom Festival and some planning workshops. He stated that throughout the study, feedback surveys had been distributed on a regular basis with some decent feedback from the participants. A majority of the respondents favor light rail for the South Central corridor, but that the participants would continue to be surveyed into 2013. He also noted that the project was slightly ahead of its scheduled 18-24 month duration, and that work would continue through late 2014. He closed by adding that he would return to the Transit Committee in fall 2012 with an update of the results from the Tier 2 screening process.

Chair Colbath thanked Mr. Limmer and Valley Metro and asked if there were any questions or comments. Mr. Martin of Mesa thanked Mr. Limmer on his great presentation and inquired if there was any sense early in the study of potential ridership for the corridor. Mr. Limmer replied that they had not yet made it to that point yet, but were now looking into travel forecast models and assumptions with input from MAG. Mr. Limmer did point out that ridership on Routes 0, 7 and 8 were especially strong, and with the new Central/South Mountain Limited bus now running, high ridership in the corridor was already a reality. Mr. Martin also inquired on the potential costs of reconstructing or rebuilding grade-separations between the Union Pacific Railroad and the South Mountain transit corridor service in downtown Phoenix. He noted that those facilities were old and outdated and most likely in need of replacement. Mr. Limmer replied that all of those issues were being addressed and added that the Central Avenue underpass/railroad bridge was historic and could not be altered, specifically due to negative impacts of the existing railroad and nearly 80-year old bridge structure. He said that all of the proposed crossings for the railroad, Interstate-17 and the Salt River were being thoroughly reviewed. Brief discussion followed.

Chair Colbath thanked Mr. Limmer and Valley Metro and asked if there were further questions or comments. Hearing no further comments or questions, Chair Colbath proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

9. Request for Future Agenda Items

Chair Colbath asked the members of the Committee if there were any issues that they would like added as future agenda items.

As noted earlier, Mr. Greg Jordan of Tempe inquired as to a future agenda item that might feature an overview of the completed and formalized MAP-21 guidance and programs when they are provided to MAG. Ms. Yazzie affirmed that she would present it at a future meeting.

Chair Colbath asked the members of the Committee if there were any other issues that they would like added as future agenda items. Hearing no further comments, she proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

10. Next Meeting Date

Chair Colbath thanked those present and she announced that the next meeting of the MAG Transit Committee would be held on Thursday, August 9, 2012, at 10:00 a.m. in the MAG Office, Ironwood Room. There being no further business, Chair Colbath adjourned the meeting at 11:06 a.m.